GOSH WOW! 3

GOSH WOW!

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MAD RIVER

Dogmatic Editorializing By BOB SCHOENFELD

You may recall that when we last left our harried hero, he was weeping and bemoaning the grim hardships of fanzine publishing. Step quietly now as we approach and rejoin him on his cardboard soap-box...

Sometimes I wonder why I am into this fanzine thing. "Why comics?" I ask myself. Why not something legitimate like coins or stamps or dirty books? What does a 20-year-old college kid see in comics, anyway? As a person, I am particularly conscious and sensitive to the inequities I see going down in the world today. And I begin to think that I must be a little bit nuts to devote my time and effort to a magazine about comic books. Occasionally I begin to think that I should devote my time to something of greater significance... Something that will turn people around... Something that will show them the error of their ways... Something of *Social Significance*.

So I tried it. I published or aided in the publication of of five issues of a semi-political journal on my college campus. And, for an "un-official" (underground?) publication, we were quite successful. The magazine was used by several teachers in lectures while others required students to buy it or supplied copies to their students. We were instrumental in peacefully bringing about or triggering several significant changes on campus.

And yet, for all our success, I still am unable to shake the feeling that it was all a waste of time. That too much needs to be done, or that too many people need to be changed...that the system is too strong to fear our efforts. One begins to see that, intellectually, "causes" are useless and that one should, instead, seek pleasure where it can be found (like fanzine publishing). But emotionally I guess I'm still too much the idealist to accept that 100% and be content. I find myself incensed with daily regularity as I read the newspaper. I cannot entirely forget that there is a real world outside the basement comics-world from which Gosh Wow! is annually reborn.

There was a time for me when comics were read for one reason: to escape from Junior High School reality where respect and/or social prominance was based upon physical prowess. I've always been thin and, physically, my enthusiasm usually outweighs my ability. So, unable to compete on the accepted level, I took refuge in The Flash or Green Lantern or Robert Heinlein and Ray Bradbury.

In college the situation changes somewhat. The physical competition still exists, but it's easy enough for one to find acceptance and satisfaction in other ways. In many respects, it is a far more intellectual thing. And I can now rationalize my continued interest in comics by saying that, within this medium, there is *Art* if one takes the trouble to dig beneath the garbage. (Beyond that, I enjoy this whole fanzine shtick. It's a challenge, it has made me many friends and I'd like to think that, in some way, it will help me prepare for the future.) But when a guy turns 18, if he has any social conscience whatever, reality is forced on him by way of the draft. And if he decides that he opposes the draft, chances are that he is likewise aware of other areas of our culture in need of change. Something, I might add, not easily put from the mind.

My position therefore, is rather tenuous. This past year my time has been divied up between crusading and the pleasures of comics, music, Gosh Wow! and Capa-Alpha, etc. That in itself should pretty well explain why this issue follows #2 by almost a year. However, one of the undeniable realities of this fanzine is that the production process tends to drag, and my enthusiasm and energy tends to come in spurts. Tom Fagan's and J.R.Cox's article was prepared for printing perhaps 8 months ago. The photo pages were prepared about three months ago and this editorial only a few weeks ago...

I would be fooling myself, I think, if I felt this could go on forever indefinitely. That's redundant, but...anyway, I'm not so sure that a continuation would be a good thing if we could have it. Change is the crux of contemporary society...and there will be some changes made in up-coming issues. NOTE: Starting with #5 the price returns to $1.00 per copy and the page-count will be increased accordingly. We have simply found the 50¢ size too restrictive for our needs. This still leaves our next issue at 50¢, however, and your mailing label tells you how much money you still have to your credit and whether or not you need to resubscribe. We urge those of you whose subscriptions do end with this issue to re-order as soon as possible and why not drop us a note of comment or criticism on this issue at the same time..?

This issue is going into the hands of many non-fans and fringe-fans. Thus, for all concerned, an explanation of how all this works: It seems to take us about a year to produce these things--give or take a few months. We're not happy about this, but that seems to be the way it happens. We ask that your support us by ordering in advance even though it may be many months before the issue appears. It is not my custom to keep $400 in capitol on hand, so it does help if you do order early--both for book-keeping and so we'll have a good idea of how many copies to print. Between issues all money is kept safe in a bank...I have no plans to run off with your money and, should I ever decide to terminate the mag, all money will be refunded.

However, if, during the gap between issues, you want to know the status of your subscription or you just want to confirm receipt of an order, please enclose a post-paid card or stamp. I cannot afford to answer all requests myself. Another problem we have had concerns people who move without sending us a note with the new address. The Post Office does not forward 3rd Class Mail, people, and if an issue does come back, we will keep it until we hear from you. But it's certainly to your advantage to inform us of any change.

GOSH WOW! Magazine. Issue #3, Summer 1969. Published every once in awhile by Robert Schoenfeld, 9516 Minerva Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63114. Phone: 314-429-0490. Price per issue: 50¢. Starting with #5, price becomes $1.00 per issue. Make checks or money orders payable to Robert Schoenfeld. Entire contents copyright 1969 by Robert Schoenfeld. Would a British fan care to represent us across the Atlantic?

This Could Be The Start Of Something Big!

A REPORT ON THE '68 SCARP COMICCON

Tom Fagan & J.R."Steed" Cox

The world hasn't changed very much at all since the SCARP Con...

But, for those fans fortunate enough to attend the 1968 convention, the world's a little more pleasant place in which to live. Particularly when one can look forward to making the scene in 1969.

And these writers will definitely be there. We, and hundreds of other comics fans really balled it up over that fourth of July weekend. It was the long run and it came on like lightening.

Everyone in fandom was wondering just what this new organization, "SCARP" (or, to be more formal, the Society for Comic Art Research and Preservation) had to offer. There had been cons since 1964, but SCARP had been ballyhooing its program to the skies.

What happened? The general consensus is that the Society came through proudly. It made its impression and it did so proudly. The SCARP colors are now an established symbol in fandom with the staging of its first and highly successful convention!

It was a major happening, both exciting and dignified, and it attracted considerable favorable comment from the press and the fans. Through coverage in the major newspapers, fandom came through with an intelligent, mature look, rather than as "kooks with komiks." And that, my friends, ain't the way it used to be, as practically everyone reading this account knows full well.

But that's getting ahead of the story. Let's back track a bit, bearing in mind that it's a sketch at best and many important people will go unnamed and many will not be credited for excellent contributions that made the con the success it was. After all, there were 784 fans attending (not counting pros) and the whole week end was one tightly-packed parcel. So if it's a

stenographer's report you're looking for, you won't find it here.

It was like this, and we're quoting the words of aspiring journalist and fan Allan Asherman of Brooklyn, N.Y. to make our point. Asherman, a familiar figure at New York comic art gatherings, has this to say:

"I hope you had as great a time at the convention as I did. It seemed to be perfectly planned. Whenever one got tired of speaking to dealers and friends, there was always Phil announcing the details of some future panel discussion.

"The exhibits were all great, too, in my opinion, with something for everyone. And there seemed to be an abundance of pros, as well as a nice crowd of fans. I made some new acquaintances, obtained some beautiful movie materials and original artwork and, in short, loved the convention.

"I hope Phil decides to stage 'next year's' cons for at least the next decade."

For the uninitiated, the "Phil" Allan mentions is in reality Philip Nicholas Seuling of Brooklyn, NY. A high school English teacher by profession, and well-respected comics dealer by preference...not to mention official SCARP originator and president. Enthusiastic and tireless by nature (two undeniable prerequisites for a con-chairman), Phil and his lovely wife Carol were the ones, it can truly be said, who held the SCARP program together by sheer tenacity and four sleepless nights.

For another fan's view, we turn to Bob Schoenfeld (Gosh Wow!'s very own editor) of St. Louis, Missouri, who fronts the annual "Gateway Con" in his own town. Wrote Bob:

"About the (SCARP) Con...enjoyed meeting you there very much, Tom. And your friend Mr. Cox. (Your age is showing, Steed--he called you Mister.) For me the prime reason I go to or put on a con is to meet other fans. I care nothing for dealers or movies...I just enjoy meeting and talking with other fans."

Bob has more to say and we'll quote him again later. But you should be getting the general picure. The Con held something for everyone with the slightest interest in comic art or its offshoot channels and that to my mind is what made the SCARP Con great!!

Since we're on a personal track, I'll take it from there. When I reached the spacious 18th floor chambers of the Statler-Hilton Hotel I knew immediately I was in the right place. There were friends to be greeted, friends like Rich Rubenfeld, Mark Hanerfeld, Len Wein, Stan Landman and Marvin Wolfman--all of the NY TISOS gang. The Vartanoff girls, Irene and Ellen from Bethesda, Mayland; (and yes, you out there, Irene does exist) Superman's most avid fan in West Springfield, Massachusetts, Joe Latino, and one of the nicest guys I've ever had the pleasure to meet; Wayne DeWald of Hialeah, Florida, co-editor of GREMLIN.

And there were other friendly people I was to meet such as Martin Greim and Bob Cosgrove, two bay-staters who publish respectively the fanzines COMIC CRUSADER and CHAMPION; "Mr." Schoenfeld who greeted me with, "Hey, Tom, where's that article you promised me for Gosh Wow!? (and presumably said article will appear in this issue or next); Paul Gambaccini of Conneticuit who was in fandom from the beginning; Barry Baumann from California and the first dealer from whom I purchased a comic book way back when; Rich Hauser of Chicago with whom I never did get to share that promised cup of mead and scores of other very groovy very fun folk.

But when someone softly cleared his throat behind me and I turned to see Steed, I knew it was on! Together we were to enjoy a host of experiences that included picking up on original art; adding coveted items to our respective collections; spend a memorable afternoon with Dick Ayers and learn "secrets" of the original Ghost Rider series; trade lively banter with Jim Steranko and Ken Dixon while a wide-eyed waitress looked on in amazement; prowl Greenwich Village streets with Newsday reporter Tony Marro; be privileged to be in the company of Harry Lucey, the artist on the original Hangman strip; and, to cap off the weekend, meet and talk well into the wee hours with Charles Biro, almost shouting at times to make ourselves heard over the thundering tones of a cocktail lounge piano.

Speeking of the weekend, Steed had this to say:

"The con gave me a new respect for what goes into producing those flimsy pieces of 'ephemeral entertainment'--the comics--both in talent and amount of sheer work. (Don't let Steed's modesty fool you, he's an authority on many things including Nick Cartr pulps and comics. He is a key man in the University of Minnesota's famous "Hess Collection," considered the finest collection of its sort in the United States. During the Con, Steed made several valuable contacts which may well lead to the inclusion of comics in the Hess Collection which previously consisted entirely of Pulp magazines.)

"Footnote to the Biro evening: There was a foreword in "Uncle Charlie's Fables" about the kids sitting around listening to Unclie Charlie tell his stories. We can tell our children that we actually did sit at Uncle Charlie's feet (figuratively speaking) and hear his tales."

As a word of explanation about Steed's last remark, let me say that while Charles Biro's rightful fame is connected with Crimebuster, Daredevil and the Crime Does Not Pay comics, few fans connect him with later work done on a delightful children's comic, "Uncle Charlie's Fables, which is a tribute to his prowess as a master storyteller who could delight readers of all ages.

For Steed and myself, meeting Charles Biro was a convention highlight. We learned that he is now with NBC, but still retains a fondness for his old love, comics. It was, in fact, through the New York Daily News write-up on the con that he learned about the program and "came down to see what was going on". Of course, it was an opportunity too good to pass up and the SCARP committee immediately coaxed him into being a guest speaker which he agreed to. His talk on the final day of the con left fans begging for more. And Mr. Biro had a tough act to follow for the preceeding speaker was none other than Milton Caniff.

However, Rich Rubenfeld, Steed and myself were the lucky ones. When Biro arrived unannounced the day before, Harry Lucey recognized him from "the early days," and we were given personal introductions. Retiring to a quieter spot (except for that blasted piano!) Lucey and Biro talked and we listened.

Biro graciously drew sketches of Daredevil for

Rich and myself and Steed received a coveted drawing of Crimebuster and Sqeeks. All three sketches were inscribed with a personal message. The hour grew steadily later and Rich and Harry Lucey had to leave. Reluctant to let the evening end, Steed and I imposed on Biro's good nature keeping him there until the place closed exchanging conversation about the likes of Iron Jaw and Daredevil (to whom Biro refers to smilingly as "the guy with the stupid spikes.") But, as must all good things, our evening came to an end. We were still wide awake and anxious for more, but Biro was weary but grinning at our enthusiasm.

Now, to kind of cover the con in leaps and bounds: Once one had registered, he could walk about viewing original artwork by many of the Greats and near-Greats of the comic book and newspaper strip fields. Two huge rooms housed the exhibit covering comics from the 1800's to the 1960's. Jim Steranko's paintings of his proposed new strip, "Talon," received their richly-deserved share of attention, as did numerous beautifully illustrated, full-color illustrations of top characters from years past by Gray Morrow.

From there it was a short trip to the Dealer's Room where one could look longingly at such wares as Marvel Comics #1(priced at a whopping $225 which, incidentally, it finally sold for), Detective Comics #40 (marked "sold" at $40 from the first day), and others far too numerous to mention. If you were like us, however, you settled for a $2.00 copy of Super Snipe or a similarly priced issue of Air Boy.

Even if you could only look, one still had the opportunity to meet such dealers as David Kaler of Manhattan, Bill Morse of Staten Island, Chester Grabowski and Doug Berman of Brooklyn, Ed Aprill of Ann Arbor, Michigan, Baumann, Hauser, and many others. Or you could pin down another fan for a deal...like trading Glen Johnson of Brigham City, Utah several E.C.s for a copy of Bat man #2.

Tiring of that one might circulate to the "Listening Area" to hear Stan Lee discuss his successful writing style for Marvel using continued stories to allow for the use of material that would otherwise be too difficult to compress into one issue. Later we were treated to a panel discussion (the first of several) on the job of the editor in comics. Wally Wood, Gil Kane, Roy Thomas, Dick Sherry (from one of the major newspaper syndicates), Joe Orlando, Dick Giordano (moderating) and Stan Lee. Each man has been or is currently involved in editing of one form or another and several different points of view arose such as Wood's technique that "he edits best who edits least" or Giordano's "mink glove" approach.

Sometime later we had the oportunity to watch the Alley Award presentation. Mark Hanerfeld (looking very much like Al Hirt) presented the Awards with Marvel scooping up all the top honors. Stan Lee received an award for Best Writer and Best Editor, with Joe Sinnott taking best inker and Jack Kirby best Pencil Artist. Carmine Infantino had received his Alley earlier before the con in the Hall of Fame category for his excellent work on the Adam Strange strip while a second Hall of Fame award went to Hal Foster for his world-acclaimed "Prince Valiant."

If you got tired of the activity within the con program, outside lay the sprawling byways of New York City. Forsaking the party which they were to put on, Bob Latona (editor of the very fine Vanguard) and our own Bob Schoenfeld split for the Greenwich Village haunts of Dr. Strange. Not that they actually met up with Stephen Strange or Clea...but enough did happen to bear telling and Mr. Schoenfeld recounts thusly:

"Our trip through the Village on the Fourth was something else again. Fireworks exploded all about and police patroled the streets like an invasion force. Latona had warned me about robberies in the Village, so I walked with $100 tucked in my shoe.

That was the evening we were going to be back for a small party with you and some other fans, but didn't get back until after midnight. And there was a swell show in the subway on the return trip--some cat threw up on himself!"

With life in the raw accounted for, back to the con: Friday's program swung into high gear with Craig Flessel discussing the very earliest days of comic books. Archie Goodwin and Al Williamson took over the podium shortly after, talking about collaboration among artists/writers. Archie and Al make a great team and it's obvious they both tremendously enjoy their work.

Pros and older fans gathered by invitation for a cocktain party in the late afternoon. Pleasantries were exchanged and the good fellowship included meeting the likes of Jerry Seigel and Flo Steinberg along with some 200 other ladies and gentlemen inthe comics field. Meanwhile, upstairs, the younger fans and movie addicts watched films of Captain Marvel, Spy Smasher and Captain America--literally hours of entertainment provided by film-fan Chris Steinbrunner.

And so the con spun on. A vast kaleidoscope of happenings. Neal Adams drawing a picture of Deadman for you. Escorting Will Eisner through a horde of fans which is somewhat like doing battle with the Chicago Police Force. Listening to Lee Falk recounting annecdotes about his creations The Phantom and Mandrake and learning that "The Ghost Who Walks" has a daily audience of 100,000,000!!

Hearing Dr. Sol Davidson of Des Moines, Iowa pronouncing "The potential for the comic art medium has by no means been realized." Or attending the Saturday luncheon where Will Eisner and Burne Hogarth each received special SCARP plaques for their contributions to the medium. Stan Lee was the only other person to be so honored.

Will Eisner, thanking one and all, then telling how he created the Spirit, Mr. Mystic and Lady Luck over a single weekend after the final go-ahead (selling the idea to enough papers) came on Friday!

Burne Hogarth acknowledging his award then challenging fans on the worthiness of "comic book tastes." And several fans applauding when his remarks were challenged by a young woman inquiring, "What's wrong with just letting comic books do their thing?"

Then there was the Maryland fan (sorry Al, your last name escapes me) patiently explaining to fans that he really wasn't Jim Steranko...and finally giving up the last day in complete surrender by writing "Sternko" on his indentification badge and letting it go at that!

Joe Orlando, Dick Giordano, Gil Kane, Leonard Starr and John Benson joining in a panel on "Comic books and comic strips" and arriving at the conclusion that art is more important to the comic book in that it is the prime selling factor while story is important to the comic strip--writing with pictures. Even if one didn't agree, the views were interesting and the art vs story debate is always a battle among fans.

The convention had been covered by three New York papers, The Daily News, the New York Times and the New York Post. CBS Radio carried an interview with Carol Seuling talking about Wonder Woman. The con had also been covered on WPIX and three other top NY television stations.

Sunday was hectic. Last minute wheelings and dealings. Rushing to hear Steranko, Caniff and Biro. Then clearing the halls in a great hurry to make room for a Jewish wedding and jostling elbows with wedding guests waiting for the down swooping elevators.

Cramming suitcases with tresures of original art and first issue books. Hasty farewells. Buses to be caught; trains to be taken; planes to be boarded. Time to go and not wanting to..!

But for some the Con didn't end on Sunday. They lengthened the celebration. Fans like Wayne DeWald who tells his experience so:

"I spent all day Monday at Al Williamson's and that was really great. Both Al and his wife are extremely nice and gracious. We (Ed Aprill, Chester Grabowski, Tony Roche from Ireland and myself) took the 8:30 bus out of New York and arrived at Al's about 10:15. Tony and I stayed until 8 PM while Ed and Chester left earlier for a show or something.

"To say the visit was a success is really an understatement. Besides seeing work like X-9 strips and originals by Frazetta, Schultz, Kurtzman, Jones, Krenkel, Crandall and others, we had a great discussion throughout the day on comics.

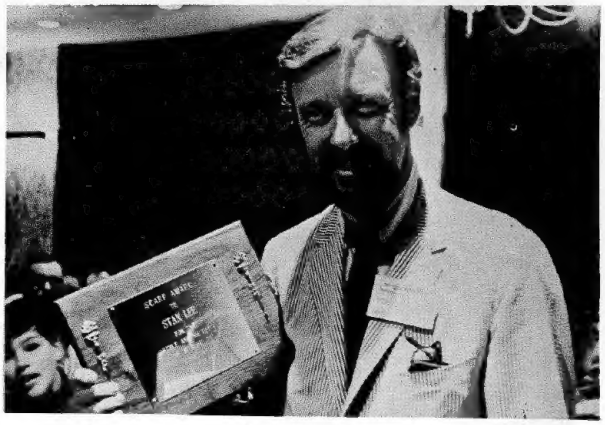
"I went to National on Tuesday and expecting the 15-minute rush experienced by Schoenfeld and a few others but ended up staying for two and a half hours. We were given the tour by none other than Carmine Infantino! He introduced us to each editor and several artists who were there like Cardy and Sparling. We talked to Dick Giordano and Murray Boltinoff for quite awhile. Another very successful day."

That's the way it went for us.

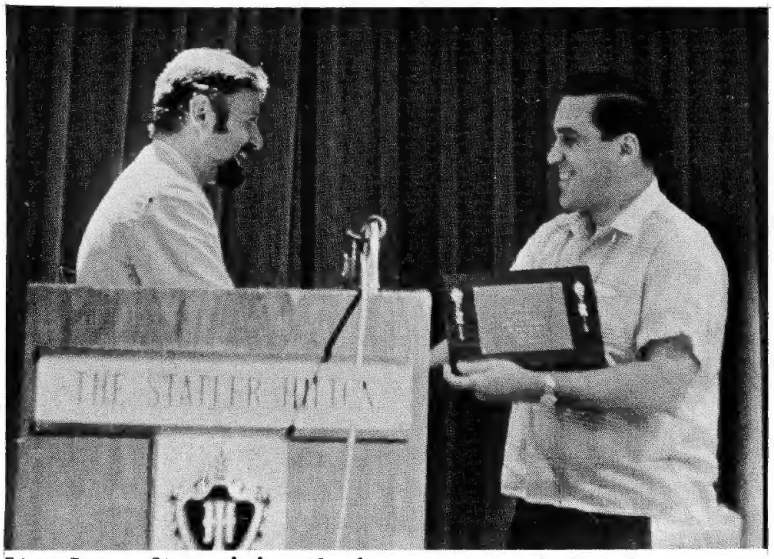
And like I said, the world hasn't changed much since the SCARP Con, but the memories remain and they're good memories!

Looking Backward:

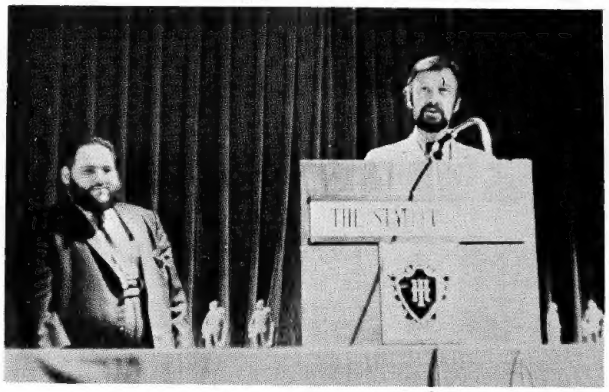
scarp con 1968



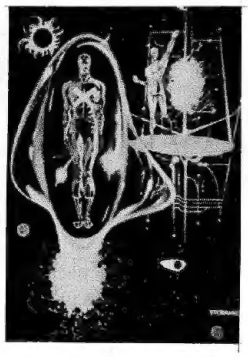
The "SCARP Award to Stan Lee for the style and maturity he brought to comic books.



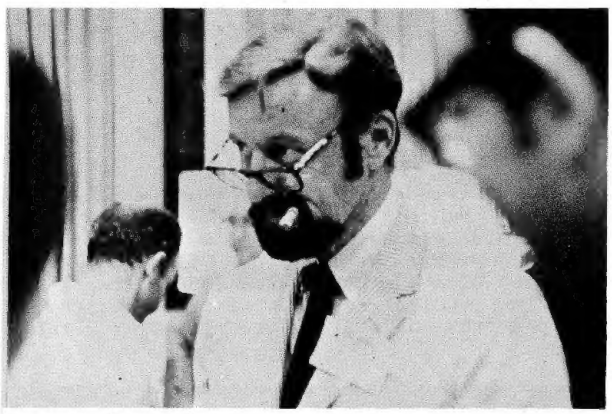
Stan Lee, after giving the key-note speech for the con, receives a plaque from Phil Seuling, convention chairman.



Mark Hanerfeld (left) watches on as Stan accepts Alley Awards for himself, Jack Kirby and Joe Sinnott.



Jim Steranko



Stan raps & signs autographs for enthused fans
Left: an art display, Steranko & Fantucchio.

Jim Steranko

John Fantucchio

Photography:

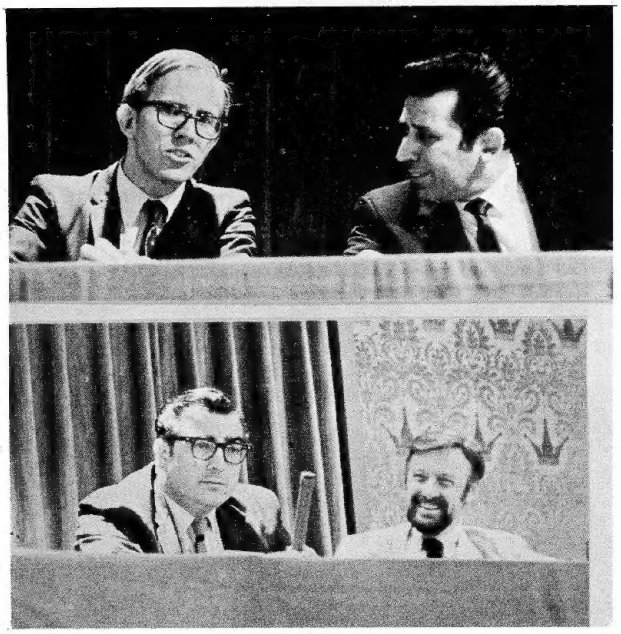
John Benson & Stan Goldenberg

Captions:

Bob Schoenfeld

PANELS AND PROGRAM

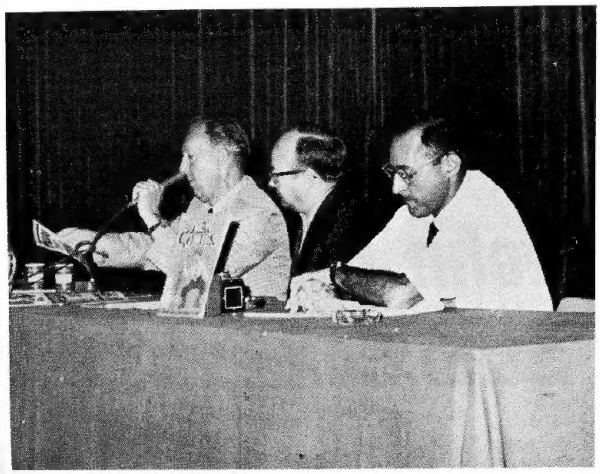
Dick Giordano moderates the editor's panel.



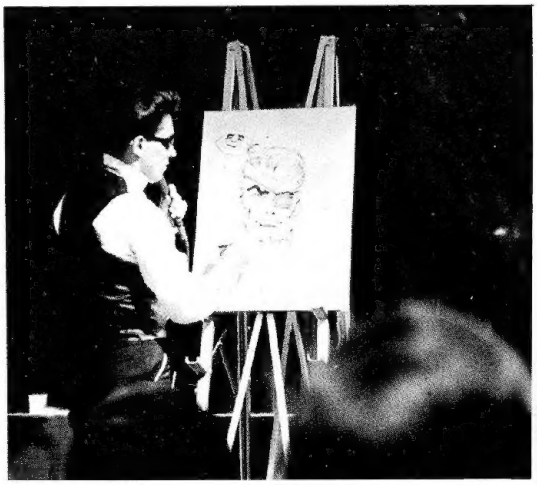
Panel Discussion: "The Job of the Editor" left to right: Wally Wood, Gil Kane, Roy Thomas, Dick Giordano, Dick Sherry (representing syndicates) whose picture appears only in the top photo, Joe Orlando and Stan Lee.

Will Eisner

Archie Goodwin (left) and Al Williamson dicuss artist/writer collaborations and their work on "Secret Agent Corrigan."

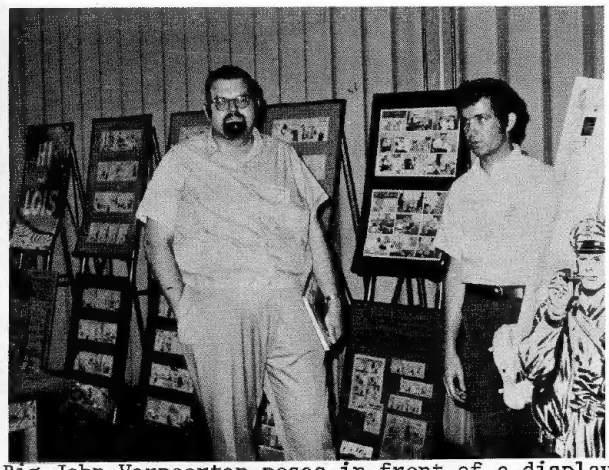


Ed Aprill, center, moderates a panel discussion on pre-hero comic books. Creig Flessel is left of Ed. I am unable to identify the man to Ed's right.



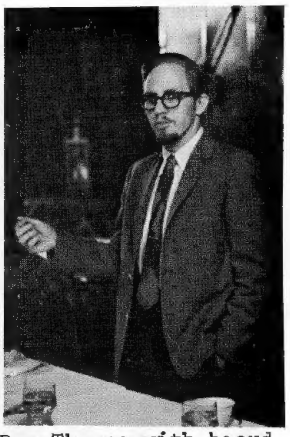
Jim Steranko demonstrates (right) his technique in drawing the Marvel SHIELD strip. Center catches him in a lone, thoughful mood.

OTHER FOLK AND HAPPENINGS

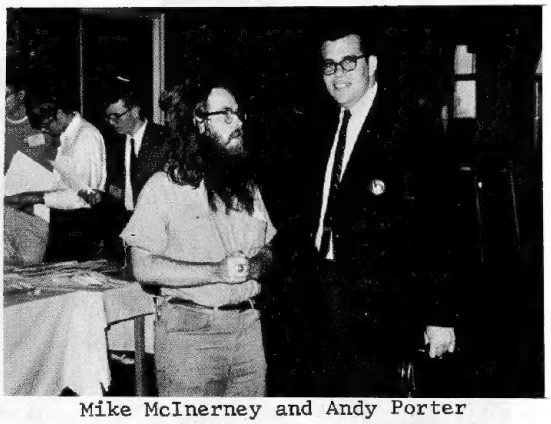


Big John Verpoorten poses in front of a display while an unknown fan looks on from the right.

Vaughn Bode' and Bob Schoenfeld look over the full-color original to last issue's cover.



Roy Thomas with beard before marrage.

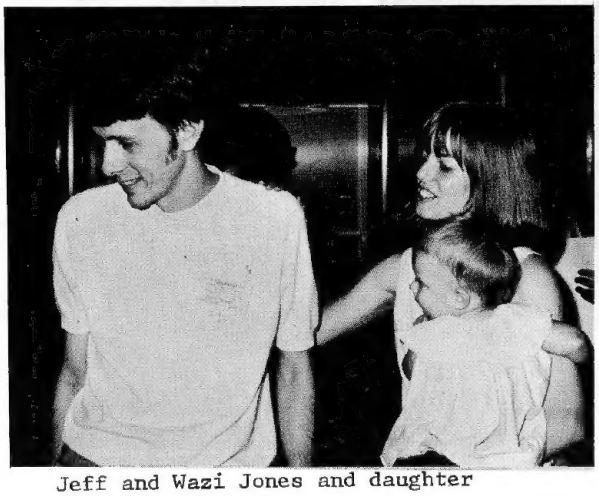


Mike McInerney and Andy Porter

Sal Trapani, Burne Hogarth and Maurice Horn

Murphy Anderson

Carmine Infantino pulls Nick Cardy (right) into the picture snapped in the National office. Mark Hanerfeld had just presented Carmine with his Alley Award for 1967.

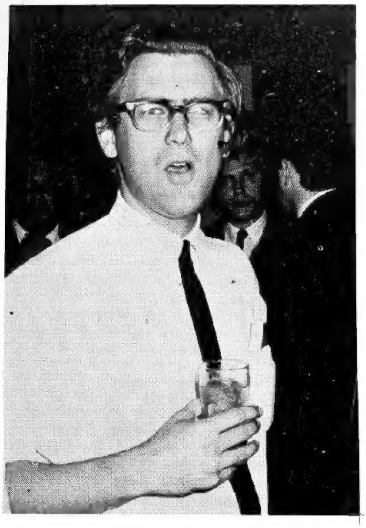


Jeff and Wazi Jones and daughter

Neal Adams

Charles Biro (of the original Daredevil) raps with Tom Fagan (center) & J.Randolph Cox.

COMIC ART CONVENTION

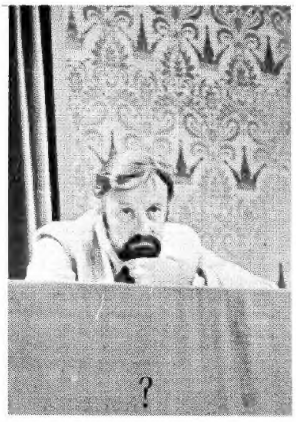


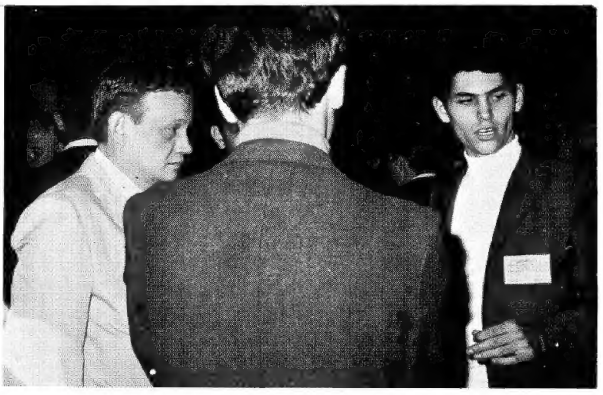
John Benson

Sal Trapani

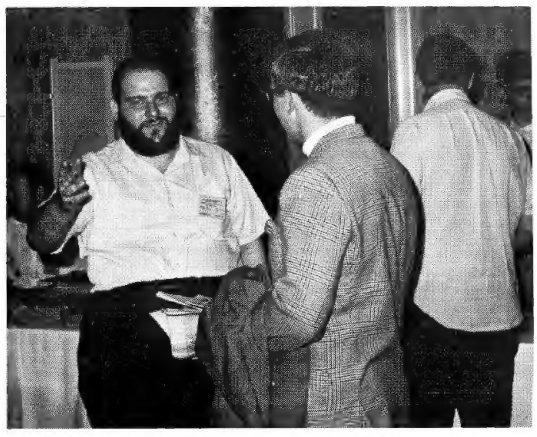
Roger Brand and Wayne Howard

Lee Falk

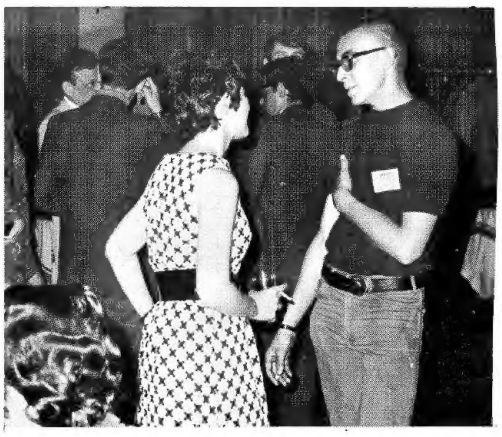




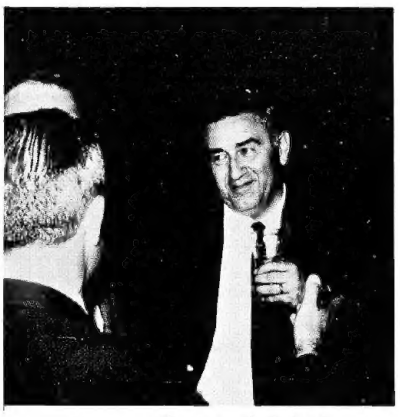
Wally Wood, Vaughn Bode's back, Bob Schoenfeld



Mark Hanerfeld (left)



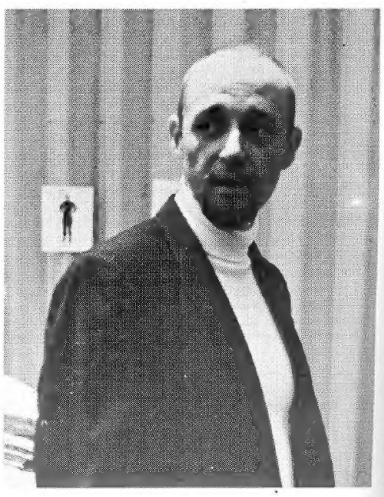
Flo Steinberg and Ralph Reese



Jerry Siegel (right)

Bill Harris and Wayne Howard

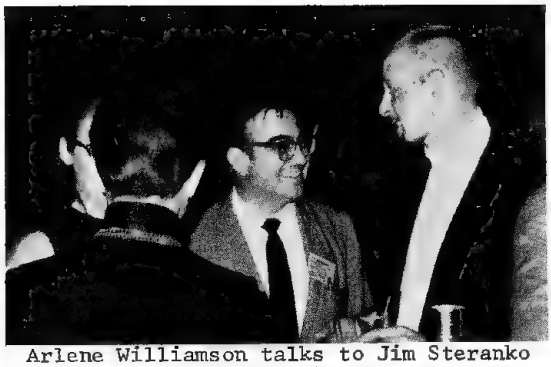
Gene Colan



Gray Morrow

John Benson, Dick Giordano and Clark Diamond

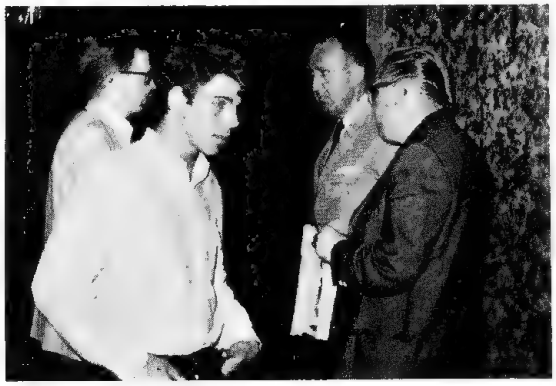
Wood au naturel



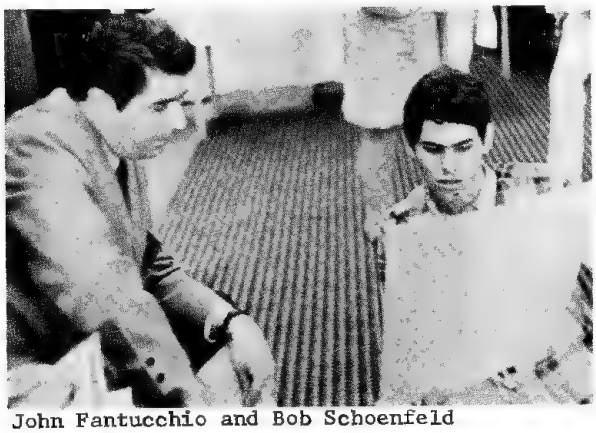
Arlene Williamson talks to Jim Steranko and Gray Morrow (right) talks to someone I cannot identify.

John Verpoorten, Arnold Drake, unknown wife, Gene Colan, Neal Adams, Leonard Starr

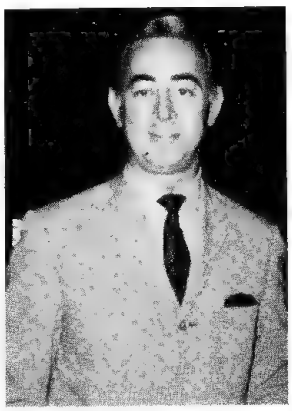
SEE YOU IN 69?



J.R. Cox, Joe Latino, Chas. Biro and Tom Fagan



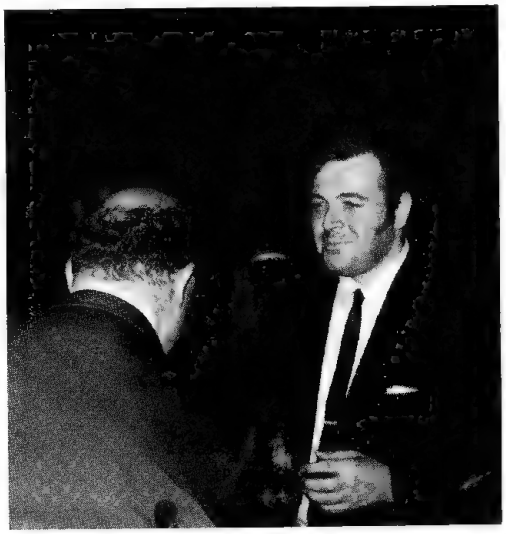
John Fantucchio and Bob Schoenfeld



Gil Kane smiles

Archie Goodwin and Al Williamson

Wally Wood hemmed-in by enthusiastic and curious fans



Neal Adams (right)

Phil Seuling, con-chairman, talks with Television reporters

PROLOGUE:

It is the Aquarian Age—Years after the fall of man from glory in the WARS... Man is on the rise again... This is the age of Steam and black powder, old ways being rediscovered and new ones found...

On the West Coast people thrive at the Port cities where the new trade brings the life blood of goods and ideas into circulation.....But in the Mid West Feudalism reigns....the Northern midwest is over run with waters, filling sunken lands and craters.....The people live on islands of mountain peaks, in half-sunken cities, on boats drawn up to wharves and buildings....

These communities are far apart, isolated, secular, fearful of strangers—yet thirsting for news. These islands are many and uncharted....few are the boats that ply these waters..... for the islands are also a haven for the ungodly; the pirates, the outcast and the mad.....

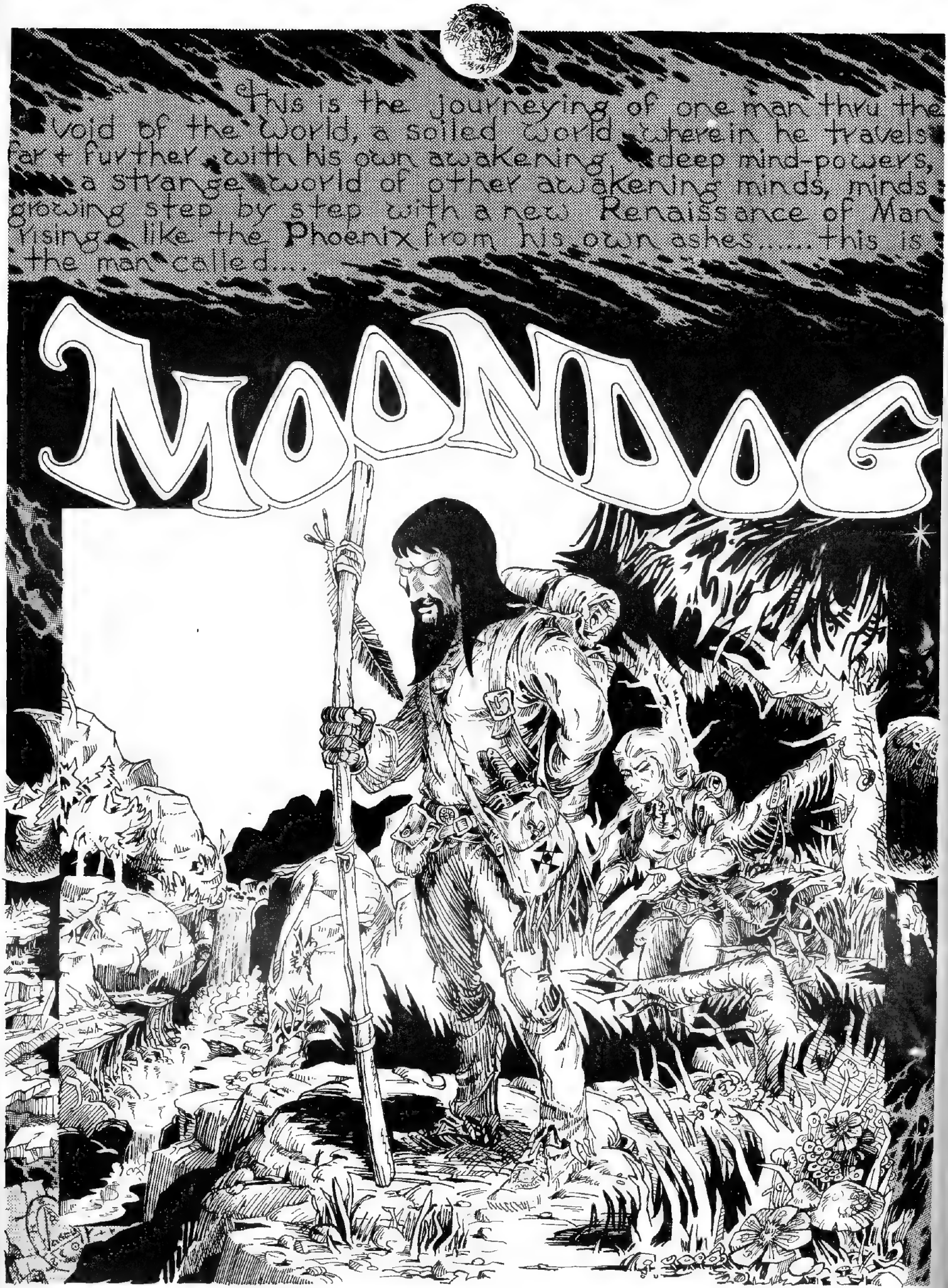
A backwater land of darkness and petty feudal warlords.... and where is knowledge? where is the light? THIS is the Museum of Man.... ancestral castle for the Smith clans... a castle of strange, undiscipherable objects—in its halls lives the hereditary clan chief **OldmancuratorSmith,** his wives and blood children...

Moondog is copyright © 1969 by George Metzger - All Rights Reserved

And it is here against this background that our story unfolds.... here with the arrival of the dark Stranger who came from the marshes to the east.....
Ehold, Stranger!
~sigh~ i'm holding..... i haven't moved for an hour-i knew you were coming...
They are a band of foragers led by the Curator's daughter... he is taken to the museum....
I come to your father's museum to study, for it IS the only bastian of books and knowledge known. To come is a calling, for it IS my Weird...
Your Weird? it may be your death! Books and learning are doubly distrusted since father's youngest son, my blood brother, deserted when our islands were hotly besieged by the rabble army under Shelton the lion, bent on looting the museum.... too, his manner of leaving was most strange...
Strange?
he flew in the sky....
2

And so the Stranger comes to the Museum of man ...and offers services and fealty to the house of Smith.... he is accepted thru the voice of the girl, priority$mith. he has access to the vaults of knowledge below..
... i sense that there is neglect and ignorance here....
the human, carnivorous, animal vibrations are close packed, as if from...
my eldest brother!
he $pends his time in books, in the dark... perhaps to find the light and follow in the path of the $hamed brother who found forgotten secrets.....
...he means me evil.... if our paths cross again— but i will not speak it— Some prophecies are best unspoken....
YOU! — another $pineless Worm to slither in the damp earth dark like my cowardly brother— I do not like your kind— $tay clear of my $teps! AND MY ITER!!
he knows the untold desires of people.....
...he knows the love of the daughter of oldmancurator$mith....
...until ....
3

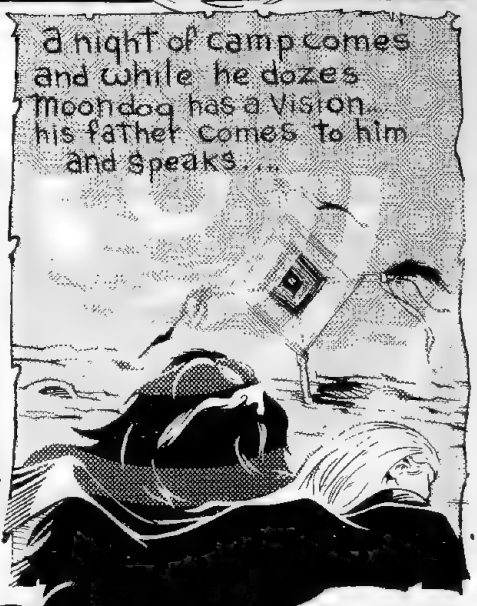
Taken Before Oldmancurator Smith..
You have violated the sanctuary of my house— You are cast OUT...
cast out! no protection—You are mine now, worm—has any gift of prophecy told You what may happen to You?
...it has... but it is part of the great pattern to be...
damn words // take him to my rooms
I have spent my whole life in struggle, dark one—fighting to keep these lands free of the rabble of the rest of the world—my cowardly brother with his books believed that what is in our museum belonges to the world—for anyone to paw over... like You!
...he would not fight to keep it ours—he fled rather than accept his duty— You are like him, savoring words 'stead of the sword—and now You are in my hands and will soon feel the might of the sword.... perhaps You should thank me...for i will give You the mark of a true visonary..
Unconscious he is thrown out on to the Shore of the island... but the girl saves him and hides him in a wing of the museum where his senses waken to a new world of sight..
With the loss of his eyes a new sight has come—he is instantly aware of all things around him, of their patterns of movement, of movement's portent and probability..... the brother had been ironically right— now he feels the coming of his powers...
i See....
Something has replaced his ruined eyes...
...and he blinds him..
There are many things in this museum—i have replaced Your eyes with iridium discs...
of her own punishment she does not Speak..
And when he is Strong to Travel they go together away from the Smithislands and out into the void that is the World.....

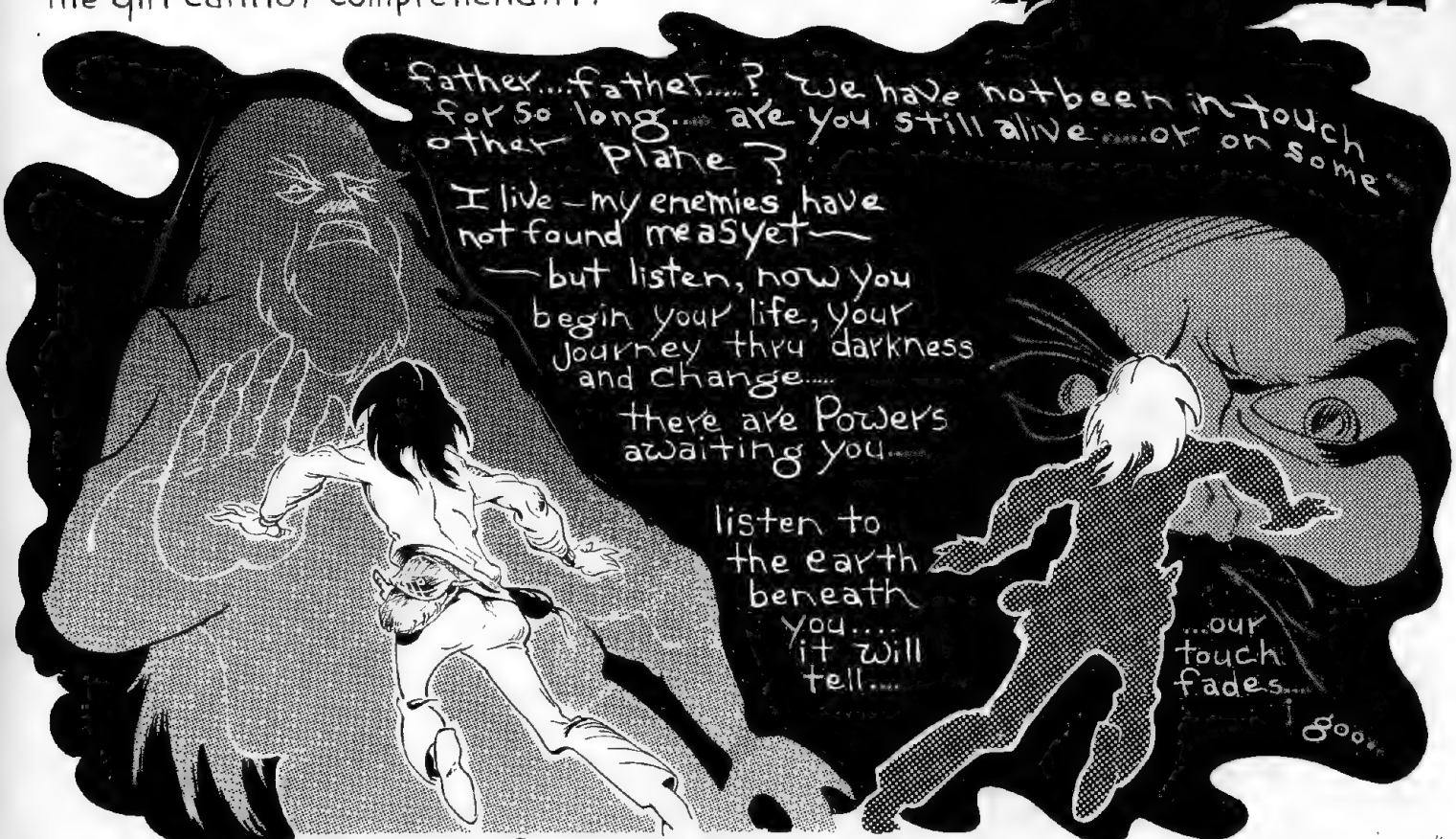

this is the journeying of one man thru the void of the World, a soiled World wherein he travels far + further with his own awakening deep mind-powers, a strange World of other awakening minds, minds growing step by step with a new Renaissance of Man rising like the Phoenix from his own ashes..... this is the man called....
MOEBIUS

Moondog and the girl PrioritySmith move Southwest thru a forest of great, dead trees bordering on the lands to the South of the Sea of islands.... new and unfamiliar

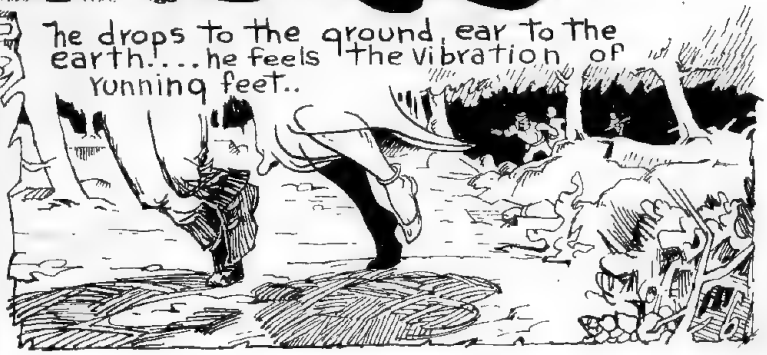
and Moondog leads the way, for he sees the land in a way the girl cannot comprehend....

A night of camp comes and while he dozes Moondog has a vision.. his father comes to him and speaks....




father...father....? We have not been in touch for so long.... are you still alive....or on some other plane?
I live—my enemies have not found me as yet—
—but listen, now you begin your life, your journey thru darkness and change.....
there are Powers awaiting you....
listen to the earth beneath you.... it will tell....
...our touch fades....
goo...

He drops to the ground, ear to the earth....he feels the vibration of running feet..



they are two, running with the feet of the frightened animal—others follow with the steady tread of the executioner!!
this way!!! we intercept!!
hold!
Hah! a blind man opposes us!
get'm!!
Seth, cover the others...
two of them... i sense the approach....
and Moondog moves...
7.

now you'll surely die for that!!!
POW!
i am moondog and this is my woman..
this is morninglory and i am M. Blue..
you have saved our lives— we thank you!
we flee the fist of morion!!!
yes, his men just destroyed our camp a ways back—we were trying to reach my ship in a nearby mainstream when we were attacked and...
before we talk perhaps we had better try and find that boat, fast!
more men come...
shortly....
ahhhhh, good morning, mr. blue—we were beginning to worry...
so was i, captain, so was i...
let us be underway then..
first mate, ha
WAP!
POW

Whew—Well, we're clear of that now—head back for the settlement, captain!
Isn't it about time we've had an explanation of all this hassle?
Who's this "fist of Morion"?
The original Morion was delivered of the Power to flow with the elements of nature....
There are stories of strange powers he could summon + direct—with his left hand! On his death his followers preserved that hand and a cult grew— They now rule these lands here—their leader cut off his own right hand and placed this symbol on it!!
He rules with this Petrified hand he permits NO interferance with the way of life he has set out for people in his land to live!!
Is that why you're being hunted by his men?
Yes, somewhat— I've been rather out spoken against him and his rule...
but added to that my present plans pose an even greater threat!
how so?
I plan to run a steamway, coast to coast, right thru his territory!
the crazy one's son is back..
Yep.

this lands border the inland Sea and are the furthest point north that we could run a line straight thru to the coast— and this would free the people of being dependent upon him— so he can't even tolerate the IDEA of it to exist! these are simple lands here— the simple and direct way to control the problem is to CRUSH it!
however, thanx to you we are still alive— the least we can do's care for you a bit...
as they make their way to an eatery....
Ohhhhh— the steam musician... the only "culture" that seems to be able to get past the fist of morion— he shows up but once a year with his steamcar and his herbs.
later, i will see him...
he is like most travelers in these times: no one knows where he comes from, nor where he goes..
the islands i come from are very provincial— explain to me of the steamway..
i believe i can lay in a railway of steamcars from coast to coast— the steamways exist now on both the east and west coasts. i could tie in with them...
—and i have almost as many engines as there are on the whole west coast...
this i was wondering about— steamcars of any type seem very rare— especially here! how do you come to have so many?

few people are able to build steam cars—but my father was one, and he had a larg "junkpile" round-house full of old engines to work from. So he built!
they'll tell you my father was mad! he spent the whole of his life building great, huge machines that roared splendidly, but did nothing more than sit— only one is in use: the steam-music car of the herbalist, a friend of my father's.
father built for the sheer joy of building. resulting in my inheritance of all these cars for living in; all have been easy to adapt to rail!
tracks of rail from the olden times is plentiful—lines of it still exist, awaiting use...
plus the rail from unusable lines that i've been salvaging...
...and here i am, starting out from the middle... and already i have run into trouble... the fist of Morion opposes my every move...
what do you plan to do now?
do?
keep trying... i can't see how i can succeed against the fist, but neither can i quit... i'll take my engines and retire to my main camp— he won't attack there
and here?
perhaps.....
Sleep comes for all..... all save one.....

Darius Mos Hirsi
Tamavind, a Strolling Harp
.....
i am Moondog...
Yeah... Well, sit down.
i come to you for information: for one the fist.
Yeah... we, uh, tolerate one another...
a traveling healer is vital to isolated communities..... i even amputated Morion's right hand, not unhappily.... you want to know of his powers—
..and you yourself, Moondog, radiate Power...
Tamavind, a Strolling Harp
True, but those Powers are only awakening— i do not fully know them..... so i must know more of one other with Power = Morion.....
....and know before his end— for i believe he is doomed.... doomed because he misuses his acquired Powers...
they will be his end... he cannot survive. he is out of harmony with the world about him...
i see his end too...
he opposes Steam when he should not— he is unable to flow with it, use it— by his opposition he strengthens it. its coming is unstoppable...

Now, all night the dark clouds boil, heralding the gathering of his powers. he will be coming in all his might....
be wary, for even in his death throes he can crush....
STORE
...are there others like him, like myself? you have traveled, heard & seen much—have you been where i wish to go?
.....
...i know..
from here i am bound for the desert, traveling the Great Run to the Southwest —i have heard of people in the wastes there....
So then, would you wish to travel with me?
if we live we will be with you....
BOOM
KRAK
there is an unnaturalness to this storm—Perhaps it is the harbinger of the fist.... Care must...
BLAM
Look!! Where the lightening struck!! the ground's breaking up!!

Morion!
and...
You don't dare risk a shooting scrape with them..
...try making a run for it.....
...while i attempt an interesting diversion..
RUMBLE
Heh Heh.. no... don't shoot him.. Heh Heh.
RASH FOOL!
do you think to oppose me?
.....i, one who directs the very forces of Nature herself?!
...and how long will Nature allow herself to be molested so
KZAP
that will silence him...
..now, quickly— the engine....
..and the end of blue....

the electrical Aurora borealis around Moondog blinds the eye & sears the ground, but as it diminishes Moondog steps away.....unharmed.....
I have mastered that, evil one...
Ahhhh...it moves.....WHAA?!
AAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHH
You! alive!
then perhaps a second bolt will convince you of death!
...but the lightening will not touch Moondog.....
.....instead.....
Ahead, blue's train has been watching the approaching steamer.....
is that Moondog catching up or.....
look! lightening all over it!
FLOOO

Quick! Reverse the Gears! Get us back there!
GRUNSSKREE

MOONDOG!

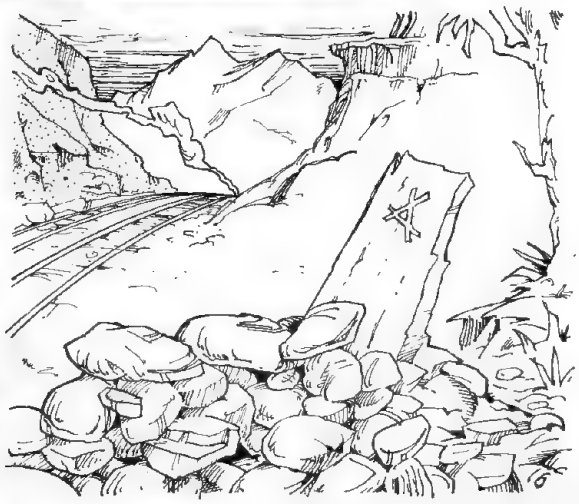
he's alive?!
..but unconscious!
No! he's in a trance!
?

the key is in the door lock, in the open...
beyond is your road a must to your road....

Reee-markable!
uhhhhhhhh

Hey! over here!

bury it.....



Methamine Blue

why?

why are we leaving... (?)...so soon...
why at all?

why stay? it holds no future for us — i must move on further to find other people — and that now leads us away.....

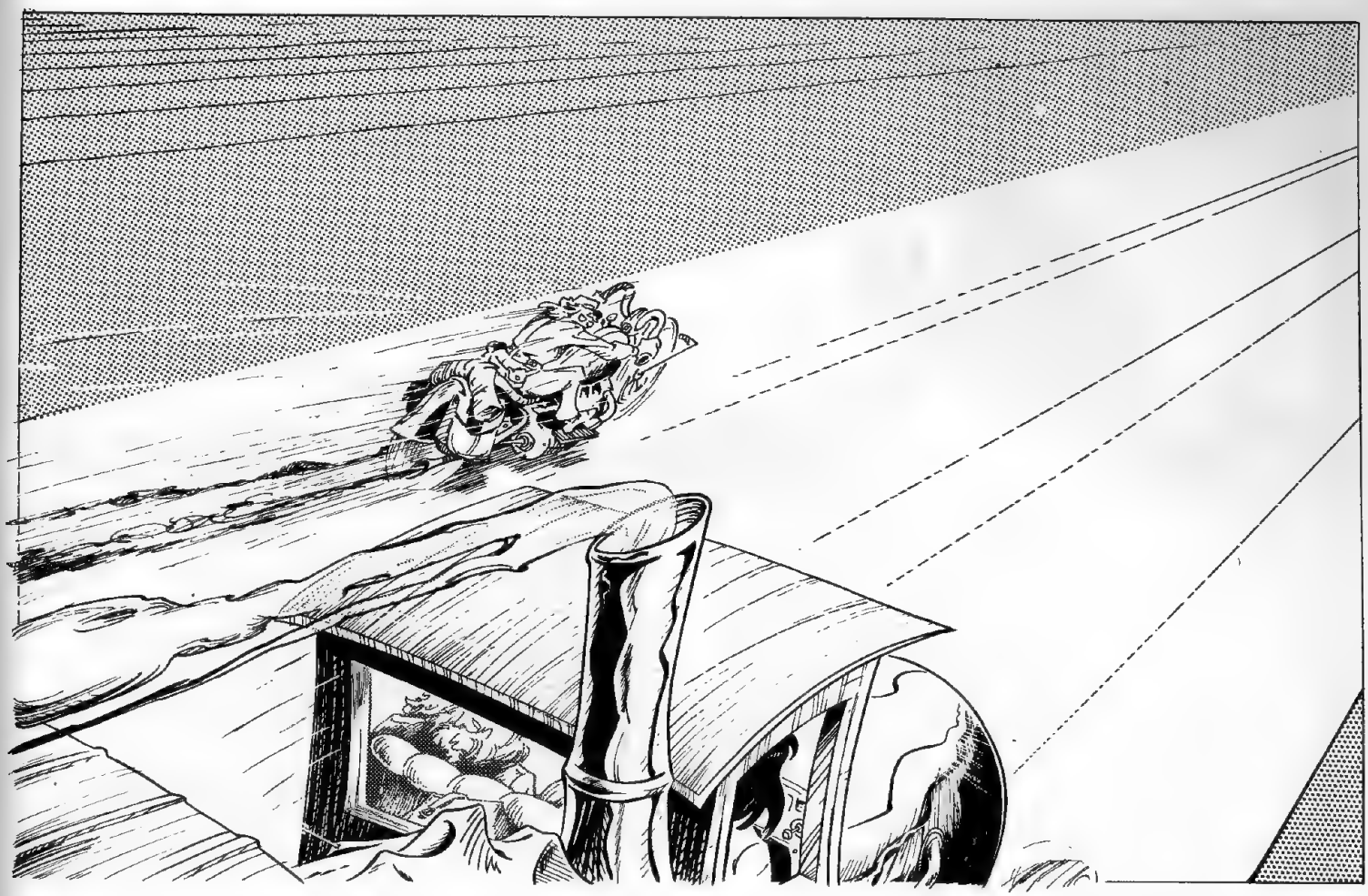
their celebration is fleeting — remember them by it, for ahead of Blue is long hard building.....
...but i am searching.....to the west.....

...west with the Steam Musician, if we can catch him on the road in the morning...

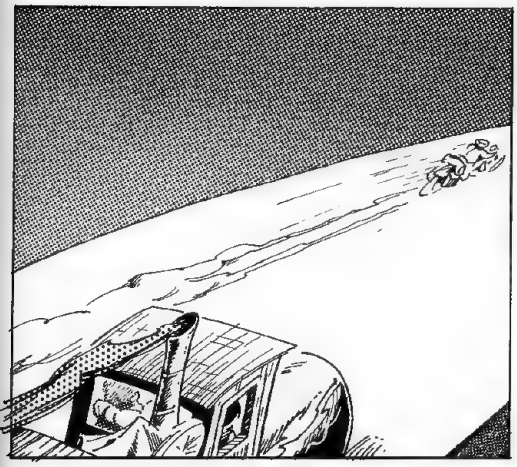
...the road to the flats...

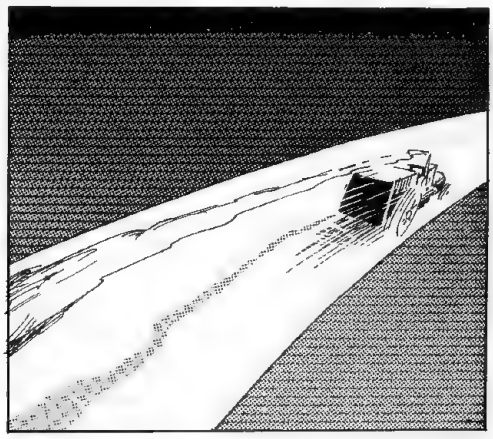
Hi!
let's go!
GRIND
We've about out of the mountains now.... You'll see what we've gotta cross up ahead.....
there! the flats....

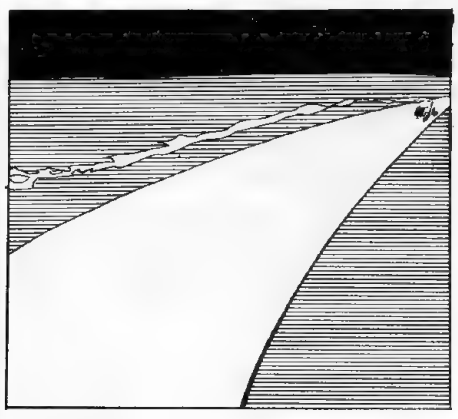
i sense a great emptiness.....
....a kind of nothingness...
yep! a great void, created long ago.... by man or nature forgotten.....
the ancients built a roadway across it, west..... where it ends i do not know....
let's go...
...but people live out there.... strange people.... people such as you probably seek, Moondog....
I have never been west on the Great Run.....
....only heard stories and myths of the Coast.....
..now we'll see for ourselves what lies there...
...See how much of California remains since its collapse into the sea, back during the cataclysmic Fall of Man...

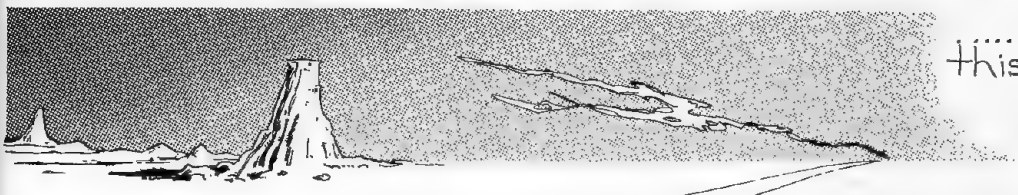


.....And so this adventure fades from view as the steam machines vanish down a road running across a blighted desert, without swerving without changing, running over the horizon to..... where?

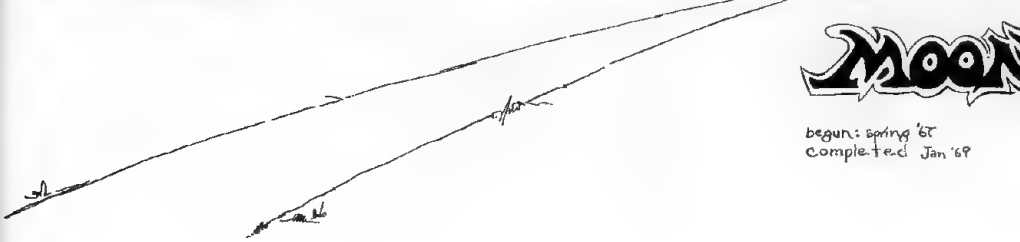








.....this is not the end....
this is the beginning.....



MOONDOG

begun: spring '67
completed Jan '69

by geo. Metzger

Vaughn Bode'
104 Medora Pl.
Syracuse, NY. 13207

After this letter, Bob, I'll be ready for lynching...and rightly so. Tibbits Tong is over before it begins...I simply won't be able to continue it for Gosh Wow! This decision and letter is just one of several I'm forced to send to the several other fan-editors who have been or were to publish my work. I have tried to make myself believe that it could be continued on a limited basis, but the truth of the matter is that I no longer have the time I'd like to have to devote to this kind of work. Originally, of course, I did...before I took on the several professional cartooning jobs I'm engaged in. And when one is trying to support a family one by necessity must supersede the other. If this weren't enough of a drain on my time, I have decided to go on to graduate school even at the expense of several professional contracts.

Working for professional SF magazines showed me that to really have the freedom of expression I want I will have to work on my own. Fandom has given me the opportunity I had never found in professional markets for free, expressive work. But working for fandom also has a dangerous side effect. I have turned down over $16,000 in professional offers...offers I would otherwise have taken were I not so caught up with the pleasures of working for fandom.

The realization that my work is in serious danger of falling victim to my need for money to live on is grimly clear. There is, too, the danger of the professional illustrator becoming drunk on the generous pay for commercial work. It is so much easier to do the commercial and advertising work than a creative cartoon and one can easily fall victim to the comfy life that leads to.

Making this decision, even at the possible expense of the valued friends I've made in fandom, has been extremely difficult for me. I've put it off and put it off hoping there was some other way. But... I only hope that you and your readers won't think badly of me for this.

Mike Barrier
Box 7420
Forest Pk. Sta.
Little Rock, Ark. 72207

The most aggravating thing about GW is the godawful spelling. What is badly needed is someone who can spell to serve as proofreader and backup man. Typographical errors are distracting enough, but nothing so thoroughly disrupts my train of thought as really bad misspellings. And GW has far too many of those.

On the more positive side, GW looks a lot better this time. The saddle-stitch stapling helps, but the layouts don't really need that kid of help. Generally they are much more sensitive and attractive this time than last. There are exceptions, like the Rawhide Kid article, but on the whole it is much more pleasant to thumb through this time. There's more obviously been an editorial hand at work; GW is less of a hodgepodge.

That holds true for the contents as well. There seems to have been an attempt to serve up a balanced meal this time, rather than a table full of left-overs that made up #1. Unfortunately, your efforts were not entirely successful. GW's menu contains too many potatoes and not enough meat. To paraphrase what Norman Mailer said about George Romney's brain, there's a great yaw at the center of Gosh Wow!, a yaw absent from the really good fanzines of the past and present. Articles or strips, in the best fanzines, are distinguished by one of two things: either a solid, informed, discriminating grasp of the history of the medium, or an equally solid grasp of what makes comic strips tick, and how they're put together--Graphic Story Theory, if you prefer.

In the best fanzines--Graphic Story Magazine, Comic Art, Alter Ego--these qualities are present in abundance, and sometimes both qualities are present in the same article or strip. The work of a George Metzger, say, or a Richard Kyle. To avoid false modesty, I think they are present to an increasing extent in Funnyworld. (These qualities are distinctly over and above the basic requirements of competent writing, art, etc., of course.) Once you have enough material with these vital qualities, there's plenty of room for material of a lighter nature, or simply more limited in scope. It's the frosting on the cake, so to speak. The trouble with GW is that it's all frosting and no cake. What this means, simply, is that a fanzine has got to have at least one "meaty" article or strip. This is what GW lacks.

Wayne Warfield's Rawhide Kid article is the closest you come to meeting the test, but it flunks badly as a "meaty" article. For one thing, the Rawhide Kid wasn't, from Warfield's own description of it, that important or that good a comic book. For another, Warfield doesn't seem to know enough about his subject to to write an article that doesn't hinge to a great extent on guesswork. The article is rambling and poorly focused...with a prose style lacking any distinction that might otherwise make us forget all these shortcomings. What Warfield might have written--and what might have been worth reading--is an article on all the Atlas /Marvel western books, and what set them apart from the westerns of other publishers. This sort of article would not have required a complete collection for authenticity.

Your second major feature also disappointed me. Vaughn Bode' is a good cartoonist, and his front cover is totally delightful (the color work is especially good), but 14 pages of "Tibbits Tong" in a 44-page magazine is about 15 pages too many for me. "Tibbits" is at the same time both imitative and overly complicated, with one fault flowing from the other. Bode' seems to like Tolkien too much, and in imitating Tolkien (Hobbits...Tibbits...come on now) he seems to have been overcome by the vast quantities of detail offered in the Ring books. Bode's detail is of a different kind, but it's no less overwhelming. The thing is, Tolkien never lets himself be overwhelmed by the world he's created, and he never lets it overwhelm the story he has to tell. Much of Tolkien's detail is in the appendices, and if we turn to them it's because we've been swept up by the story. With Bode' the appendices are at the front. Perhaps I'll feel differently about the feature once the story does get underway.

Fred Hembeck
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Looking through Gosh Wow! #2 sets one to wondering whether GW is or is not an article-zine. 23 of your 44 pages are taken up by fan-fiction of one sort or another. I am not opposed to high-quality strips or text heroes, but if you are going to call GW an "article zine" you really ought to keep the fiction down to a minimum.

The fan fiction in the second issue solicits a mixed reaction from me. George Metzger's variations were a welcome sight and I've always enjoyed his work in other fanzines. I'm still trying to figure out what his second tale was about, but when I do I will have a feeling of self-fulfillment of the sort that one could never get from a run-of-the-mill strip. Trying to psyche out what he's doing is half the fun, so whatever you do, keep Metzger in your zine.

Larry Brody's Nightwalker was better in the premiere tale. This feature too has a place in GW! My only dissatisfaction, however, would be with the illustrations. They are skillfully executed and stylistic, but I believe Fantucchio may be guilty of "borrowing" layouts from Gene Colan. I may be mistaken, but I believe the fight scene on page 19 and the scene of Nighty walking into the horizon were copped from Colan's Daredevil and Iron Man respectively. It is possible that this is sub-conscious, but I am always quick to spot and recall "swipes" and more prone to be irritated by them.

Vaughn Bode's Tibbits Tong was a sore spot with me. Sure, this strip seems to have tremendous potential, but I can't appreciate devoting 14 pages on an untried strip. Bode is an extremely fine cartoonist, but he needs a bit of editorial restraint. The text page was interesting, and had it been accompanied by two or three pages of illoes, it would have been an excellent feature. As it stands, there is too much repetition and I cannot see how breakdowns of this sort can be of benefit when he does get around to telling the story. Right now I can't tell what influenced him most--Walt Kelly or Popular Mechanics. I'm very much looking forward to the strip, but I do hope it will be a bit more economical.

The article portion of the issue maintains the same high standards established with #1. Warfield's Rawhide Kid article was a well-written critique of a rather off-beat subject. Ken Keller's artwork and the use of photos complemented the text quite nicely.

The obvious problem and complaint with the Open-Letter lies in the fact that it was so dated. A great deal has transpired at National since it was written, though whether or not their furious activity will mean improvement remains to be seen.

Gary Mason
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Not to slight the innards, I think the best thing about Gosh Wow! was the cover. John Ryan mentioned recently a figure in dollars that such a thing ordinarily costs. Congratulations on not having to pay it!

I guess my favorite contribution would have to be Bob Cosgrove's Open Letter. It hammers home quite well a point that I am ever at a loss to understand--how so many of my fellow fans can fail to understand that sales, rather than cultural value, is what motivates all entertainers, be they motion picture makers, television executives or comics publishers. It's axiomatic really.

"The Story of the Rawhide Kid" was a beauty, though it would have to have been to get me to read a six-page feature on a character whose comics I never have and never intend to buy.

Richard Weingroff's shortie set me to thinking--what was my reaction when I was a "normal reader" of comics? Just the same as now, I think. I really don't react, as such, at all. I just read the things--grimacing at the bad ones or smiling and filing away the good ones. Yes, entertainment is all it could possibly be. The idea that there could possibly be as much of a lesson as Weingroff suggests ("not that we should physically fight our problems, but simply that we should fight them") I find horrifying. I guess I've always been cynical enough to know that comics are produced for profit and that if the readers get anything beyond sufficient pleasure needed to induce his continued buying, the surplus is an unintentional gratuity.

Marvin Wolfman
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I feel that I should make a few comments in reply to Rick Weingroff and a little background info on that Alan Burke show he mentions. For example, when the camera was off of me, the stage manager was constantly hurrying me, telling me what I could and could not say and I was totally cut-off in the midst of some comments. We (Mark Hanerfeld and I) were not allowed to bring anything on stage to illustrate our side of the argument. Yet Wertham was permitted to nit-pick. I attempted to catch him on several inconsistencies in his book which he, of course, refuted. Had I been allowed to bring the book on stage, I could have pointed them out. But I wasn't. I did catch him on the point that NO foreign publisher was reprinting the old horror stuff...and he altered his position to "some" of the old stuff.

It is important to realize that Wertham was the guest, not Mark or I. This sort of thing indicates the intent of the panel to begin with. Even the publisher on the panel with Wertham did not fare so well. Several of the people who defended comics were never shown. One woman who made a statement in favor of comics was cut off at a point that could only lead one to assume she despised them. Under the circumstances, even Rick would have been hard-pressed to make a better showing.

I was quite glad to see Bob Cosgrove's Open Letter and I think he'll be pleased to know that many of his suggestions have been or are going to be implemented in future books. Under Carmine's leadership, National is expanding into new areas, trying new things and fishing for other chanels in which to direct the books. There is a greater dispersement of artists and writers among the various editors and many artists are now plotting and writing the same stories they illustrate. As for the crack by Don Thompson that no one at DC listens to letters, he couldn't be further from the truth. But experience has led me to refrain from trying to change his mind. It can't be done.

Doug Moench
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Gosh Wow! #2 arrived and, to my surprise, turned out to be the best comics fanzine I've seen in all-too-long a time. Best, unfortunately, does not mean being perfect (or even good in too many cases).

George Metzger is obviously a very "hip" person. He is aware. His taste in art (comic art, anyway) runs very nearly parallel to mine. His comments on Ronn Foss' art are very perceptive and he is right in saying that Foss is over-rated. However, I find Metzger's art also unappealing for different reasons. I applaud his attempts to overcome the constrictive "rules" of comic art. If I could draw at all, I'd try something with a like purpose behind it, but striving for a different result. Freshness and originality to not mean clutter and ambiguity. Originality should rely on page layout, lettering (which he has gotten into but sometimes goes overboard with), panels drawn from unconventional or even distorted angles and points-of-view, and well-written dialogue. If a strip sports these points, I'm willing to forgive almost any plot--as in the case of Jim Steranko and, at times, Will Eisner. More often than not, the worth of a comic strip is measured by the ability of the artist and the smoothness (rather than excellence) of the story. Both Eisner and Steranko can turn out a smooth story, but I do not recall to mind one truly excellent story from either one. The strips are excellent, but not the stories or plots in themselves.

Metzger's two brief offerings were better this time than the things I've seen in Bill Spicer's zine. He seems at home when getting into the freaky forest scenes. The first tale, a kind of "prodigal son" thing has a nice message and is generally easier to follow than anything previous I've seen. His second tale (The Conquerors??) was less easy to follow and offered a rather trite moral (if I really did follow it at all) which loses even more of its punch in view of the confusion he creates.

The thing I dislike about the intentional ambiguity of the strips is that the reader tends to read too much into the story (as perhaps I have done in naming them). One usually learns that the meaning and significance he has himself imparted to the work has no relationship to what was intended by the artist.

Bill Spicer
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Los Angeles, Cal. 90042

GW's front cover is excellent. You've scored at least one coup with it, too: to my knowledge, it's the first comic fanzine to have a cover printed with 4-color separations. ERBdom has been using them for quite some time (the only zine in its field to do so, I believe), but as far as I know GW2 was the first comics zine to do so. My main gripe, however, is with your printer: the printing is just slightly out of register. On the whole it isn't too noticeable, but there are areas of fuzziness in small corners which a tight registration would have rectified. This misregistration is even more evident on the back cover. The red is a good 16th of an inch off, and in 4-color work that's a hell of a lot.

My original idea, where the type-block on the back cover is concerned, was to print solid blue over solid yellow type, thus creating a green "The Fanzine of Comic Art". Originally the blue would have been solid, but the printer has screened it down to about 30% and the only reason I can guess is that he must have known he'd be using a weak yellow. As it stands, the caption is barely readable.

I wish I could say I liked Bode's Tibbits Tong introductory pages, but they didn't do much for me. His imagination is terrific in creating a whole world and society of the Tibbits, even down to all the governmnet statistics on manufacture of the Tong Balls, but as a whole I'm not sure the series is going to appeal to me. I wouldn't argue with you that he has talent to burn. He does. It's just that some of his story concepts and the manner in which he executes them are basically anti-developmental in further progress of the "graphic story." And this is paradoxical, because Bode', of all the artists to enter the comics field in recent years, appears to be one of the few who's capable of thinking in "graphic story" terms instead of comic book terms. And yet the bulk of his work which I've seen has been essentially comic book. (or, at times, even worse--similar to EC's old Picto-Fiction magazines, where some drawings were accompanied by huge amounts of endless running text. On the other hand, some of his stuff is wonderfully well done, and I will probably try to run some of the best in forthcoming issues of GSM. It may be, too, that he's just spreading himself too thin to do his best work on everything he sends out. He's got so damn many comics serieses in the works for different fanzines, that something is bound to suffer. I'd rather see him cut down his output and concentrate on just three or four strips.

Dwight Decker
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Westerville, Ohio 43081

Both covers were exquisite, even if the yellow blurb on the back was difficult to read. Inside, Gosh Wow! is perhaps the most impressive magazine comics fandom has yet produced. It is, indeed, the fanzine for this fandom. The quality of your text material is high above that generally found in other fanzines, the art was consistantly excellent, and the layouts were a welcome relief from the sloppy dittoed pages clogging the fan market.

Yet, for this, GW still has its faults. I said the text material was good...and it was. But when one started thinking about it, there really wasn't that much in the issue. Warfield's article, the Nightwalker and two pieces that were little more than fillers. By the use of the illoes, Cosgrove's Letter was stretched to cover four pages when it probably could have been adequately contained in two. The illoes themselves are are direct copies from the comics themselves and could have been deleted.

Nightwalker was really good stuff. Yes, probably the best adaptation of the super hero theme to text yet --fan or pro. Again, however, my complaint is with the illustrations. They seem overly-large--particularly the fight-scene on page 19. Asside even from the size of the illoes, it is markedly inferior Fantucchio, too. Obviously my primary interest in fanzines is the text material, and generally I like to see illustrations kept to a minimum unless they take the form of a strip.

"A Suggestive Approach" was a rambling, pleasant thing, though short. I just wish Rick had made his point clearer so I could be more sure of what he was trying to say. It seemed to be that some nasty old man was saying that comics weren't any good for growing boys and girls, but he is wrong--or something like that. I have had a brief correspondence with Dr. Wertham myself, and he is definitely not the spittle-drooling ogre who single handedly destroyed EC and personally established the villainous Comics Code. Rather, he is an elderly, highly intelligent gentleman whose only crime was speaking his mind and attempting to state the truth as he saw it.

/Editor's Note: Certainly, Dwight, every man has the right to speak his opinion. But along with that right he likewise has a certain intellectual responsibility to be in a position to support and prove his position. Wertham was guilty of seeing in generalizations. Like so many people, he sought an easy answer to what is really a complex problem--namely juvenile delinquency. And while he may not have "single handedly" destroyed EC and set up the comics code, he, more than anyone else, was responsible for that turn of events that led to these two incidents. Wertham may be an elderly gentleman...but highly intelligent? No. --bob/

John Ryan
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Fairfield, NSW. Australia

Many thanks for GW!#2...it's much better that I had ever anticipated, even allowing for a natural improvement by experience. I guess the cover shook me up more than anything else. You are indeed fortunate to obtain the work of someone like Bode'. The choice of muted and subdued pastel colours complimented the illustration perfectly. /Editor's note: By way of explanation regaring last issue's cover: Unlike our usual procedure, where colors are added seperately to a black and white drawing, Vaughn's cover was done in full color with a wide assortment of felt-tip pens and, I think, a little water color. To reproduce this, he arranged to have the separation negatives made--a service which saved us a good deal of money. Thus he was able to make use of various subtle color graduations that would otherwise have been tedius, if not impossible, to achieve! --bob/

Your wide use of illustrations extracts the full value from the cost of litho/offset printing. I'm sure Bob Cosgrove never expected to see his comparatively short letter to be so profusely illustrated...and illustrated so damn well. In fact, there was no poor art in this issue, which in itself is quite an achievement. I'm still opposed to fan-fiction in a comics fanzine... but if more of Larry Brody's work is going to mean more fascinating illustrations by John Fantucchio, then I'll go along quietly.

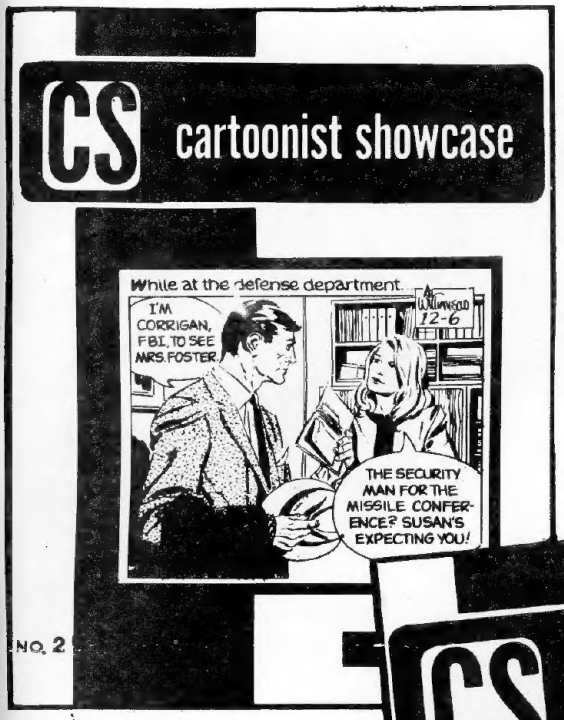
You'll probably get dozens of complaints about the length of Bode's Tibbits feature...and while that was my own first reaction, a closer look shows that you would have been hard-pressed to reduce the illustrations to, say, half-size. Such a move would have necessitated re-lettering and much loss of detail in the art itself. No...you've done the right thing. I'm only sorry to hear that the feature has been forced into a premature burial.

PLUGS:

A very nice Canadian gentleman by the name of George Henderson publishes two magazines which ALL serious fans of comic art should follow: Comic World ($3.00 for 10 issues) consists of reprints of vintage newspaper features like Krazy Kat, Superman, Little Nemo in Slumberland, etc. Reproduction is excellent and the service he is extending to fandom is unprecedented. Whizzbang, his second publication, is devoted to the areas of movies, books, radio, science fiction, nostalgia and art. He has carried articles on various vintage comics here and run, for example, a feature on Alex Raymond's non-comics art. Both of these are highly recomended. Whizzbang ($1.00 for 4 issues) and CW available from Memory Lane, 594 Markham St., Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Graphic Story Magazine #10 has just appeared before this issue goes to press. Again, editor/publisher Bill Spicer proves that his journal leads the fanzine field in quality. He has the finest strips (professional work by Vaughn Bode', Vice Davis and others) and the finest text material in the form of fascinating interviews and the finest letter column going. You can do no better. Send $1.00 to Bill at 4878 Granada St., Los Angeles, Cal. 90042.

We also recommend Ed Aprill's reprint magazines as advertised elsewhere in this issue.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FORMAT

Size-8½ × 11 inches. Two color, glossy covers. Eighty pages printed on high quality 60 lb. paper in black and white.

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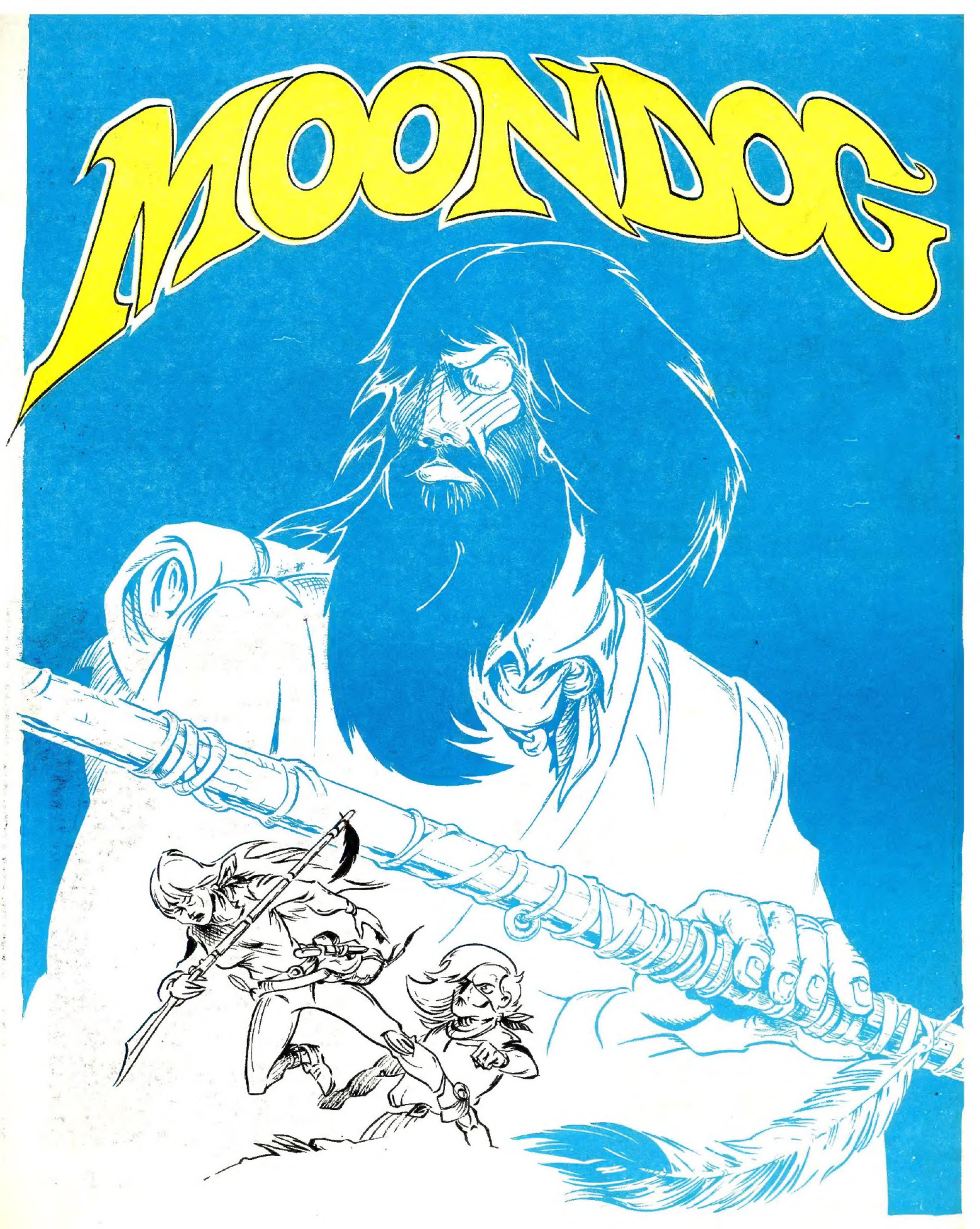
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